KP medics demand ban on wheat pills to check deaths by suicide

However, growers suggest restrictions on sale to prevent financial losses

By Ashfaq Yusufzai

PESHAWAR: Doctors have called for a complete ban on the sale of wheat pills, insisting people are using these highly lethal aluminum and zinc phosphide items to die by suicide.

Mardan Medical Complex director Dr Gulzar Ahmad Khan wrote a letter to the divisional commissioner on Friday, recommending the sale of wheat pills in the region in the "best public interest".

He also called for the imposition of that ban across the province.

The director noted that the consumption of wheat pills was causing medical emergencies, with the mortality rate of almost 90 per cent.

"It is intimated that wheat pills (aluminum phosphide or zinc phosphide), which are highly toxic rodenticides and fumigants, are easily available on the market. These pills cause very severe poisoning in humans when taken accidently or in suicide attempt," he said.

Dr Khan added that those pills caused massive multi-organ failure, while poisoning caused by them was a catastrophic medical emergency with no known antidote.

The doctors at accident and emergency departments told *Dawn* that aluminum phosphide (AlP) was a highly toxic, inorganic compound, used primarily as a fumigant for stored grains and a pesticide.

They said the AIP released extremely poisonous phosphine gas on contact with moisture or acid, making it a common cause of accidental or intentional poisoning with high mortality, so it required strict licensing and handling due to severe cardiovascular, respiratory and neurological effects.

"We receive many patients who consume wheat pills and die ultimately. Some of them survive just because they're brought to the hospitals on time," a senior medical officer said.

He said that most AIP victims were women who took the pills just because they're available in the houses of farmers.

The expert said some women had claimed after surviving suicide attempt that they're forced by their male family members to consume wheat pills.

He said a ban should be slapped on those pills as their use was an easy way to end lives.

However, farmers oppose a total ban on wheat pills, saying the pills are undoubtedly dangerous but there should be a strict control on their sale to prevent misuse.

They insisted that a blanket ban could cause serious agricultural losses.

"These fumigants are still one of the most effective tools for protecting stored wheat from pests, especially in large godowns and rural storage facilities," a grower said.

He said completely banning the sale of wheat pills would lead to destruction of large quantities of stored wheat by insects and rodents.

The farmers said the ban on wheat pills could lead to financial losses to farmers, cause food insecurity and increase wheat prices.

"Instead of a total ban, authorities should consider restrictions on wheat pills and allow their sale by those with proper and valid licences only. They can limit the sale of wheat pills to registered godowns, flour mills and trained users," a farmer told *Dawn*.

He also said wheat pill packaging should be controlled and a ban should be slapped on their loose and open sale permitting.

"Only sealed, labelled packs should be allowed under strict monitoring," he said, recommending penalties and jail terms for illegal sale.

The growers also urged district administrations to hold training and awareness sessions for wheat pill buyers and handlers.

They said the government should promote safer alternatives for those pills until affordable substitutes were available.

SIUT PAKISTAN

SINDH INSTITUTE OF UROLOGY AND TRANSPLANTATION

SIUT - Maryam Bashir Dawood Children & Cardiac Hospital is a newly established 14-story facility dedicated to provide specialized care in Paediatric Nephrology, Paediatric Urology, and Paediatric Cardiovascular Diseases. This new facility provides free state-of-the-art medical care to all with dignity and respect.

If you are passionate about Paediatric Care and have experience or a strong willingness to learn, we encourage you to apply for the following positions:

GROW WITH A PURPOSE-DRIVEN TEAM

Department	Position Title	Qualification	Experience
Paeds Nephrology	General Peadiatrician	FCPS Paediatric or equivalent qualification	Fellowship in Paediatric Emergency Medicine
	Dialysis Technician / Technologist	Intermediate (Science) plus one-year diploma of Dialysis Technician recognized from Sindh Medical Faculty or BS Medical Technology.	02 years of experience as Dialysis Technician.
Paeds Urology	Senior Lecturer	FCPS/MS or equivalent qualification in Urology or Paediatric Surgery.	Fresh
Division of Cardiothoracic Sciences	Senior Sonographer	Bachelor degree in cardiovascular science. Formal Trained in Echo Cardiography.	05 to 07 year of experience in Cardiac Echo Cardiogram either Adult or Paediatric.
	Sonographer	Bachelor degree in cardiovascular science. Formal Trained in Echo Cardiography.	02 to 03 year of experience in Cardiac Echo Cardiogram either Adult or Paediatric.
	Junior Sonographer	Bachelor degree in cardiovascular science. Formal Trained in Echo Cardiography.	02 years Training in Paediatric Cardiology Echo.
	Cath Lab Nurse	B.ScN/Diploma in General Nursing & Midwifery with valid PNC registration.	02 years of experience as Cath Lab Nurse.
Paediatric Intensive Care Unit	Assistant Professor	FCPS in Paediatrics & must have successfully passed the relevant certification exam.	Fellowship Training Completed.
	Sr. Lecturer	FCPS in Paediatrics & must have successfully completed Training in Paediatric Intensive Care.	Fellowship Training Completed.
	Senior RMO	FCPS/MD/DCH/MCPS training completed in Paediatrics	Fresh.
Anaesthesia	Assistant Professor	FCPS or equivalent qualification.	02 years' post Fellowship experience.
	Consultant	FCPS/MCPS or equivalent qualification.	05 years' experience.
	Specialist	MCPS / DA or equivalent qualification.	Fresh
	Senior RMO	MBBS, FCPS Training completed.	Training Completed.
Paeds Urology, Paeds Nephrology Dialysis, Cardiothoracic Sciences, ICU	Resident Medical Officer	MBBS from recognized University.	01 Year House Job completed
Pharmacy	Pharmacist	Pharm-D from recognized university	03 years working experience in Hospital Pharmacy.
	Pharmacy Assistant	Intermediate Science (Premedical) or Dispenser Diploma with good computer skills.	Experience in IV dilution and chemo-preparation will be preferred
Nursing (Paediatric Urology, Paediatric Nephrology, Cardiothoracic Sciences, Paediatric ICU/ HDU)	Staff Nurse	B.ScN/Diploma in General Nursing & Midwifery with valid PNC registration.	02 years of experience as Staff Nurse. ACLS and BLS certifications are considered as an additive advantage
	Nursing Assistant	One-year certification of Nursing Assistant from reputed Institution.	02 years of experience as Nursing Assistant
Laboratory (Chemical Pathology, Haematology, Blood Bank, Microbiology)	Jr. Technologist	BS in Medical Technology	01 year training tenure completed as a Trainee Technologist.
	Trainee Technologist	BS in Medical Technology	Fresh
	Phlebotomist	Intermediate Science	02 years of experience as a Phlebotomist.
Operation Theater	Trainee Medical Technologist	BS in Medical Technology	Fresh
	Trainee OT Technician	One-year diploma of Operation Theater Technician recognized from Sindh Medical Faculty.	Fresh
	Trainee Anaesthesia Technician	One-year diploma of Anaesthesia Technician recognized from Sindh Medical Faculty.	Fresh
Central Sterile Supply Department	CSSD Technician	Intermediate (Science) plus one year diploma of CSSD Technician	03 years of experience as CSSD Technician.
	Instrument Washing Technician	Intermediate (Science) plus one year diploma of CSSD Technician	02 years of experience as Instrument Washing Technician.
Electronic Health Record	Infrastructure Analyst	BS/BE degree in IT or related fields preferably with ITIL training, CompTIA A+ or similar related certification	03 years of prior experience of working in a Customer Service center across a global/ large organization. Excellent knowledge of supporting Desktop PCs, Peripherals, Network in windows environment. Knowledge/ Experience of working on Servers/ Server Operating Systems will be added advantage.
	Infrastructure Assistant	Intermediate/Diploma in Information Technology (IT)/ Electronics or related field	02 years of experience for IT Support in large organization. Hands on experience of Network cabling, laying and termination of cable, configure and install PCs/Printers and troubleshooting skills
Engineering Department	Mechanical Engineer	BE in Mechanical Engineering	05 years of experience as Mechanical Engineer preferably in a hospital setup.
	Air- Conditioning Supervisor	Diploma of Associate Engineer (DAE) in Refrigeration & Air-Conditioning / HVAC from a recognized technical institute.	07 years of experience as Air- Conditioning Supervisor preferably in a hospital setup
	Air- Conditioning Technician	Diploma of Associate Engineer (DAE) in Refrigeration & Air-Conditioning / HVAC from a recognized technical institute.	03 years of experience as Air- Conditioning Technician preferably in a hospital setup
	Electrician	Matriculation and Wireman License	03 to 05 years of experience as Electrician.
	Plumber	Matric with Plumber pipe fitter Licence.	03 to 05 years of experience as Plumber
	Carpenter	Matric	03 to 05 years of experience as Carpenter.
	Painter	Matric	03 years of experience as Painter.
	Mason	Middle	03 to 05 years of experience as Mason.
	Mason Helper	Middle	01 to 02 years of experience as Mason Helper.
	Lift Operator	Matric	03 years of experience as Lift Operator.
Biomedical Engineering	Trainee Technician Service Technician RO Plant Operator	B-Tech (Hons) or Diploma in Biomedical Engineering / Electronic	01 to 02 years of experience in maintenance of Dialysis Machines & RO Systems.
Medical Social Work	Trainee Medical Social Worker.	Bachelor of Arts. Candidates with Sociology/Social Work course will be preferred.	Fresh
Housekeeping	Sanitary Worker	Middle	02 years of experience as Sanitary Worker.

Please send your resume to **hrd@siut.org or hrd.siut@gmail.com**
You may also apply online **https://siut.org/join-us/career** latest by **January 20, 2026**. Only Shortlisted Candidates will be contacted.